prohibition of foreign liquors in Bhopal and some other Indian States was also mentioned by way of suggesting the adoption of a similar course in Travancore. All the major municipalities in the State were more or less agreed that as far as possible no liquor shops should be located within municipal limits and suggested that as a temperance measure the location of liquor shops within municipal areas might be prohibited. If Government thought prohibition not immediately practicable, the municipal councils might be allowed local option and three-fourths of the total number of liquor shops might be closed down at once. The Member made the following further suggestions for making Travancore dry :—

1. Liquor shops should be located far away from markets, schools, law-courts, churches, temples, etc.

2. The total number of such liquor shops should be reduced to one-half to start with and should be reduced further every year.

3. The quantity made available for sale in each shop should also be reduced to one-half, and, in course of time, the sale of liquor should be stopped altogether.

4. The number of trees licensed for tapping should be reduced year by year.

5. Licensing boards with non-official majority should be started.

6. Facilities should be given for carrying on propaganda work.

The Member also drew the attention of the Government to the necessity for effecting retrenchment in public expenditure and for the overhauling of the departments of the State and for the reorganisation of the services.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Punnose Jacob, I have listened with interest to your enthusiatic speech on the subject of prohibition or temperance. You dealt firstly with the location of liquor shops in Kottayam. The question of location of liquor shops in the major municipalities was taken up and discussed by the Excise Committee, and the question will be decided when final orders are passed on that report. In regard to the reduction in the number of shops, you will find from my address delivered yesterday that the number of shops is being steadily reduced. It is a slow process. But because it is slow, it must all the more be sure.

20. Forest policy.

MR. K. C. ABRAHAM (*Member, Nominated*) represented the grievances caused to the people by the present policy of the Forest Department in several matters and made certain suggestions relating to the administration of the department. The grievances mentioned were firstly, the difficulties of people living in the outskirts of reserved forests. The mainstay of those people was agriculture and they used to clear the forests and raise paddy from those lands. This was put a stop to by making it an offence to enter the reserves. This was a source of grievance to the people living in the border of the reserves. It was suggested that swamps in the reserves might be disafforested for purposes of paddy cultivation which besides providing occupation to the cultivators would render importation of paddy into Travancore unnecessary.

Secondly, the people had to undergo considerable difficulty in obtaining free passes for felling trees from their *patta* lands as a *mahazar* prepared jointly by the Ranger and the *Proverthikar* was necessary under the existing system. To avoid the difficulty, the Ranger should be authorised to grant passes on an examination by him of the records relating to an application.

The next point was about the felling of Royal trees from private lands. Full rights should be given to cut and use all trees including Royal trees standing on private lands whether registered prior or subsequent to 1068. In regard to Royal trees already removed by the contractors from private lands, the payment of *tadivila* to the parties concerned was inordinately delayed and orders should be passed for the early payment of the same.

Another source of grievance mentioned was the policy followed by the department in the matter of sale of timber. Under the existing practice timber could be sold from the depots only. This was a source of hardship to people

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living away from the depots. The Forest Department might be empowered to sell timber from the places where timber is collected for transportation to the depots as the existing twelve major depots and the minor depots were inadequate as agencies for the distribution of timber throughout the State.

The Member then pointed out the necessity for appointing Prosecuting Rangers to conduct cases relating to the Forest Department as the Rangers under the existing arrangement could not attend to such work without prejudice to regular departmental work. The expenditure for the Prosecuting Rangers could easily be found by the reduction of the Forest Divisions into four.

The necessity for the publication of the tour programme of the superior officers of the department, the formation of Forest Panchayats, the cancellation of the order laying down the maximum size of timber *junghars*, and the cancellation of the order of the Konni Divisional Forest officer laying down the maximum quantity of bamboo, *eatta* or cane which may be used as float materials in *junghars* were the other suggestions made by the Member. He also urged that the rule regarding the acceptance of the lowest tenders by the Divisional Forest Officers should be insisted upon.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Abraham, your representations will receive careful consideration and examination at the hands of the Government.

21. Kanni Elam Lands.

MR. PERUMAL PILLAI SANKARA PILLAI (*Member, Todupuzha taluk*) said that compared with the cardamom cultivators of the High Ranges, the ryots of Todupuzha were placed at a considerable disadvantage under the existing Kanni Elam Rules. The leases of Kanni Elam lands were to be renewed at the end of five years and the leases which were to have been renewed in 1100 were not so renewed. The decision of the Government to extend the period of the leases to a further period of three years from 1100 was a source of grievance to the cardamom cultivators of Todupuzha. Such a decision created a suspicion in the minds of the ryots that the whole tract would be converted into reserved forests in course of time. He complained that the cardamom ryots of Todupuzha had received no help or facilities from the Government as their *confreres* in the High Ranges even in the matter of communications. No action had been taken on the applications for long leases of Kanni Elam tracts at the enhanced assessment of Rs. 4 per acre made in pursuance of the Government notification on the subject. He assured the Government that there was no fear of the ryots denuding the forests of their tree growth as it would be the interests of the cultivators to have as much shade as possible. The Kanni Elam tracts might therefore be registered to the ryots on the same terms as the Makaram Elam tracts or, if that was not possible, to grant long leases for twenty or twenty-five years on the higher assessment of Rs. 4 per acre as proposed by the Government in their Notification. The Kanni Elam ryots might be given the same facilities in the matter of communications, etc. as the Makaram Elam ryots in the High Ranges.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Sankara Pillai, the Government were quite willing to lease the Kanni Elam lands at Todupuzha for a period of twenty or twenty-five years on an annual rent of Rs. 4 per acre. But a good many of the holders of these lands would not agree to the higher rent. So, the Government had to extend the operation of the old rules for three years. Since then, the question has come up whether the lands can be assigned at all in the interests of the forest conservation. The conditions regulating the assignment of cardamom lands on the High Ranges are very different from those in force at Todupuzha and it will not be possible to apply those rules to the Kanni Elam lands. But I can give you this assurance that I shall now take up the question and see whether it would be possible to come to some arrangement by which the lands can be leased out, with sufficient guarantees for the security of the trees on these lands.

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